CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 28 August 1969, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. K. CHRISTOV (Bulgaria)

(Previous verbatim records in this series appeared under the symbols ENDC/PV.1-ENDC/PV.430)

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	Mr. L.F. PALMEIRA LAMBREIA
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Special Representative of the Secretary-General:	Mr. D. PROTITCH
Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General:	Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (Bulgaria) (translation from French): I declare open the 432nd plenary meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

2. Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina) (translation from Spanish): I wish to begin this intervention by expressing in the warmest terms my thanks for the very cordial words and good wishes with which the co-Chairmen and all the other delegations have welcomed Argentina's entry into the Committee on Disarmament. May I be permitted to express, in particular, my gratitude to the representatives of the sister republics of Brazil and Mexico, with which my country maintains old and special links not only by reason of our geographic situation but also because of the even stronger ties that derive from many shared ideals and aspirations throughout our common history.

3. Personally, I am very happy to meet again with several friends with whom I have had the pleasure to work on earlier occasions. I could not fail to mention among them the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Protitch, whose co-operation and help will be of inestimable value for my first steps in this Committee, as they were some years ago in the Fourth Committee of the United Nations.

4. Argentina joins the Committee on Disarmament with what we feel are the best of credentials. They stem from the pacifist vocation of its people and the maintenance, during more than a century and a half of independent life, of an unchanging line of conduct based on respect for and observance of legal and political principles that are fundamental to a satisfactory co-existence between States.

5. This line of conduct and these principles led us to co-operate with other countries and to make our unrestricted contribution in the various international bodies, and particularly in the General Assembly of the United Nations, to the search for equitable solutions to the delicate questions relating to the subject with which we are concerned.

6. We believe, therefore, that these antecedents are unequivocal proof of our readiness to co-operate and we interpret the invitation extended to us to participate in this Committee as a recognition of that willingness and also as a demonstration of confidence in the contribution that is expected of us. Conscious of the respondibility that this implies, we intend to live up to this confidence by pledging our most determined efforts from now on in order to contribute to the earliest possible achievement by this body of the objectives that inspired its creation.

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7. Generally speaking, the Argentine Government welcomes with satisfaction the agreement reached for the enlargement of the Committee and considers that this will encourage the efforts towards disarmament. In fact, in this way greater representation is ensured, and therefore the possibility that new agreements on this subject will take into account an acceptable balance of obligations between the great Powers and the other members of the international community. Both factors can significantly contribute to strengthening the possibilities of universal acceptance of those arrangements which may be concluded in the future.

8. My Government is convinced that the Committee has in its hands the most serious problem of our time. So much so that the message of the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Mr. Juan B. Martín, which was read at our meeting on 7 August, stated:

> "'We believe that nothing that may be done in other international forums will have any meaning unless general and complete disarmament is achieved.'" (ENDC/PV.426, para. 26)

Those simple words eloquently reflect the importance we attach to disarmament and reiterate our unswerving position on that question. Indeed, as we have repeatedly maintained, it is solely on the outcome of negotiations leading to disarmament that the future of mankind depends. It is no longer a question of hoping with more or less optimism to succeed in our undertaking. We must succeed. To do so is in the nature of an imperative which we cannot evade, since we all know what the alternative would be.

9. Of course the partial agreements achieved so far are to some extent encouraging. But that is not enough, because we must not lose sight of the fact that our final goal is general and complete disarmament. Nor can we afford the luxury of wasting time. Time, in this case, is not on our side.

10. The incredible technological development during recent years reflects most clearly what man can do in this field. It suffices to cast a backward glance at what has happened in the course of this century -- and, without going back so far, in the past decade -- to image without any effort the possibilities the future may have in store for us. A few days ago we watched dumbfounded the feat of the landing on the moon. We have not yet recovered from our amazement, and yet the events of recent years in the conquest of space left no doubt that sooner or later

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that feat would be accomplished. Of course, the moon is not the last frontier of space exploration. Science continues to make progress at an ever-increasing rate, and what we are reluctant to believe today will be an every-day reality tomorrow.

11. But just as there are achievements at which we have the right to rejoice, considering them to be real triumphs of man, there are others, no less admirable from the technical or scientific point of view, which unfortunately show the extremes to which his ingenuity can go to devise his own destruction.

12. For that reason it is our imperative obligation to find ways and means to put the capabilities of man exclusively in the service of peaceful progress and put an end to the alarming process that threatens the human race with destruction. It is to be hoped that, to that end, we shall apply the same intelligence which has made possible such extraordinary conquests, or, if we lack common sense, that at least the most elementary instinct of preservation will prevail.

13. It is obvious that the primary responsibility is incumbent upon the great Powers, which alone possess weapons of mass destruction and the means of firing them to any place on earth. However, we other countries of the international community cannot confine ourselves to playing merely the role of passive spectators. A nuclear conflict would make no distinction between the actors and the spectators: it would affect them all equally. Hence we must act speedily and do what we can to ensure that the great Powers continue the dialogue that has been initiated and arrive as soon as possible at satisfactory solutions. We must contribute ideas and the weight of our opinion -- which in the final analysis is the opinion of the vast majority of countries -- in order to help bring about such solutions. We must also make them aware of our anxieties and aspirations, because at present the hopes of the world are focused not only on the cessation of the arms race and on disarmament but also on the logical consequences that would derive from such measures, namely, the use of the enormous resources that would thus be released, for the promotion and development of the economically backward countries.

14. The amount of the sums -- publicly recognized — which the great Powers devote to the production of weapons and to defence have been quoted at many international meetings. It is not my intention to repeat them here. It suffices to point out that those sums, the combined totals of which reach astronomical figures, would be sufficient to solve many of the problems which afflict the countries of the world, including those same Powers, in the fields of nutrition, housing, health and education.

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15. Even since the climate of negotiation was created the Committee on Disarmament has been one of the instruments of rapprochement between the great Powers. Here I should like to pay a tribute to the nations which since the establishment of the Committee have worked to give concrete form to the desire for peace and harmony which animates all peoples, thus putting the international community in their debt. I am sure that the eight new members which have joined the Committee, inspired by the same aims, will help to realize our aspirations for disarmament, for the achievement of which we have still to go a long way beset with difficulties.

16. Argentina has joined our Committee at a late stage in the sessions of the current year. For the present, therefore, we shall confine ourselves to making known our preliminary reactions in regard to the subjects which we consider most important, without prejudice to our right to revert to them later in order to determine our position after a thorough study.

17. First of all I will deal with a question of fundamental importance -- that of the total prohibition of nuclear tests for military purposes. Argentina maintains that underground nuclear explosions of that kind should be prohibited.

18. For the construction of ever more sophisticated instruments of war there is still the possibility of testing, which is, to no small extent, an incentive for the constant development and perfecting of such instruments. We consider, therefore, that agreement should be reached on this subject.

19. The Argentine Government has followed with the greatest interest the various proposals put forward with a view to reconciling the extreme points of view in regard to the prohibition of underground nuclear tests. We distinctly note that the decision to be taken on the prohibition of underground nuclear tests is essentially a political one, as has been stated in this Committee, and we trust that a positive change of attitude will occur in the positions adopted by the super-Powers.

20. However, we wish to establish quite clearly that whatever system of control is adopted it must contain sufficient guarantees and safeguards to prevent its being abused, because, in the last analysis, what is at stake is world security and most particularly the security of the States not possessing nuclear weapons. No one can ignore the fact that if one of the great Powers, owing to failures in the control procedure, were tempted to carry out clandestine tests, the other Power would have

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the means to re-establish the balance by resorting to new tests itself. Thus the treaty would be a dead letter and we would be faced with the competitive spiral, which is exactly what we seek to prohibit. We emphasize this point because for us it is essential that the interests of the countries which are not members of the so-called "nuclear club" should in no case be disregarded.

21. A prohibition of underground tests of nuclear weapons above a given magnitude, as suggested by the United Arab Republic, or a moratorium on tests (DC/PV.75, para.134) (ENDC/144, p.33), are provisional solutions to the basic problem while we are actively working for a definitive agreement. My Government is also studying with interest the proposals of Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan and other delegations, aimed at improving the exchange of seismological data as a preparatory measure for the verification system of a possible agreement.

22. An essential aspect which must be taken into account, whatever treaty may be concluded, is the right to carry out explosions for peaceful purposes. This is a fundamental question that concerns the very technology of the future and the possibility of its utilization must be jealously preserved for all States.

23. Another very important aspect which is under consideration by the Committee is that relating to chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. Many delegations have already referred to this subject, pointing out the grave threats represented by the production and possible use of such weapons. My delegation entirely supports the opinions expressed in this sense, but in order not to strain unnecessarily the attention of the members of the Committee I will not add further arguments on this point but will turn directly to an analysis of the question.

24. We have read most carefully the report of the experts presented by the Secretary-General on 1 July 1969 (A/7575) in compliance with the request made in General Assembly resolution 2454 A (XXIII) (ENDC/237); the clear and alarming conclusions at which the authors of the report arrive are so explicit in themselves that they do not call for any further comments.

25. Argentina has signed and ratified the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (A/7575, p.117). Consequently, it goes without saying that we would gladly support any move to exhort States which have not yet done so to accede to that Protocol.

26. We have been glad to see that the delegation of Canada, in document ENDC/266, submitted to the Committee at its meeting on 26 August (CCD/PV.431, para.54 et seq.), takes up this concern and deals with it in the preambular part and more explicitly in the second operative paragraph. The other aspects of the Canadian draft are being

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studied with the greatest attention by the competent Argentine bodies and I hope to be able to comment on them on another occasion.

27. In keeping with our position on this question, Argentina, together with the delegations of eleven countries, has co-sponsored the draft declaration contained in working paper ENDC/265. The representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, in her intervention at our last meeting, made a detailed analysis of this draft when submitting it to this Committee for consideration (CCD/PV.431, para.71 et seq.). There is little that I can add to that excellent presentation, except to say that by its clear aims it represents an important means for the elimination of a condemnable method of warfare and which in consequence we think should receive the support of all States.

28. Lastly, there remains to be mentioned the proposal made by the Secretary-General, in point 3 of the foreword to the aforesaid report, in which he calls

> "... upon all countries to reach agreement to halt the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents for purposes of war and to achieve their effective elimination from the arsenal of weapons." (A/7575, p.xii)

Argentina considers this to be an element which completes the picture of the total abolition of such weapons. Consequently, it is ready to participate in any joint effort that may be made by the Committee on Disarmament with a view to concluding such an agreement.

29. I do not wish to conclude this part of my statement without expressing our thanks to the delegation of the United Kingdom for its contribution to our work by submitting to us the draft convention relating to the prohibition of biological means of warfare. The amended text of that draft (ENDC/255/Rev.1), also introduced on 26 August, (CCD/PV.431, para.38 et seq.) is being carefully studied by my Government.

30. Argentina attaches very special importance to the tasks which this Committee is carrying out for the purpose of preventing an arms race on the sea-bed and the ocean floor. The studies carried out in the Ad Hoc Committee and in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction, as well as the discussions which have taken place in those bodies and in which my country has taken an active part, have made clear the danger to peace

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represented by the military and technological advances in connexion with the use of the sea-bed, the growing strategic importance which they are acquiring and also the complexity of the problems so created. From what has been said during the present session of the Committee it clearly emerges that the members of the Committee on Disarmament have not overlooked the importance of this subject; this has been reflected in an extensive exchange of ideas on some of the most important aspects to be covered by a draft treaty on this matter.

31. In this connexion there is no doubt that whatever may be the provisions of this treaty they would be determined solely and exclusively for the purposes of the treaty and would in no way prejudice existing national jurisdiction or rights over territorial waters and the continental shelf. The United States draft (ENDC/249), in its article II, paragraph 3, makes this circumstance very clear.

32. My Government believes that the disarmament of the sea-bed and the ocean floor is an objective which must be attained within the broad framework of general and complete disarmament under strict international control. However, and taking into account the difficulties which have arisen in this Committee with regard to the scope which such a treaty should have, we believe that one way of making progress in this matter would be to obtain the certainty that no nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction would be emplaced, thus eliminating all possibility of initiating an arms race on the sea-bed by those countries which are sufficiently advanced technologically to enable them to do so. We believe that this attitude is consistent with our position as a non-nuclear-weapon State whose concern is not to install offensive weapons of any kind in the environment to which we are referring, but derives from the need to protect ourselves.

33. Here I should like to point out that we agree with what was said by the representative of India, Ambassador Husain, in his statement of 14 August. He said:

> "The basic principle, in the view of my delegation, should be the essential security interests of coastal States and particularly the security needs of non-nuclear-weapon States with long coastal lines difficult to defend. It is a cardinal principle of our negotiations in this Committee that all measures of disarmament should be balanced so that security is ensured equally for all States." (ENDC/PV.428, para.14)

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34. Another consideration that has attracted the attention of the Argentine delegation and which we must stress in this first examination of the problem of the security of coastal States is the proposal of the Canadian delegation relating to the possibility of including in the draft treaty the concept of a security zone extending 200 miles or more miles from the outer limits of the band in which the prohibitions of the treaty would not apply. (ENDC/PV.410, para. 9)

35. In accordance with what was said by the representative of Canada, Ambassador Ignatieff, in his statement on 31 July:

> "No State, not even the coastal State, would be allowed to emplace in this zone weapons prohibited by the treaty. Within this security zone, however, the coastal State, or any other State acting with the explicit consent of the coastal State, would be able to perform those defensive activities not prohibited under the treaty, while other States would have no such rights." (ENDC/PV.424, para. 23)

For our part we understand that for this idea to comply with the aim pursued the security zone would have to encompass the whole of the continental shelf of the coastal State.

36. A concept such as the one to which we have referred which would meet the legitimate defence requirements of the coastal States might perhaps facilitate more rapid agreement leading to the achievement of the aims we all pursue. This is of special interest to those States which, like Argentina, have a long coastline and an extensive continental shelf.

37. Another aspect which has been commented upon at length in the Committee is that of the observation and verification of possible violations of the provisions of a treaty on the disarmament of the sea-bed and the ocean floor. It has been made clear that the solutions proposed for this purpose in the two drafts (ENDC/240, ENDC/249) before us do not entirely satisfy most of the representatives of the medium-sized and small States.

38. My delegation considers that the treaty should include the broadest possible methods of control which would allow for verification by all the States concerned, although this does not mean that the rights of the coastal States as regards their security and their respective legislations would not be taken into account. This

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peculiar situation to which the projected treaty would lead distinguishes it from other international instruments. For this reason it is not possible to formulate analogies with outer space. Nor is it possible to do so with the Antarctic Treaty[1/]. Argentina duly delimited its sector and, in conformity with article IV of that instrument, none of its provisions is to be interpreted as a renunciation of Argentina's sovereign territorial rights. It is obvious that this condition does not modify the free access of the contracting parties to Antarctica for the purposes of scientific research and the non-militarization provided for in that Treaty.

39. In his statement on 29 July, the representative of Brazil suggested:

> "... that the process of control should be undertaken, in any of its stages, with the direct participation of the coastal State whenever the simple observation and consequent verification ... is to take place in areas over which that coastal State exercises special national jurisdiction." (ENDC/PV.423, para. 77)

Ambassador Frazão very rightly pointed to the existence for each coastal State of the right to prior notification of and co-participation in any inspection carried out in an area adjacent to its coast. As the representative of Brazil said, in a treaty solely designed to prevent the adoption of armament measures on the sea-bed there is no place for any ambiguity or controversy resulting from different legal positions concerning the extent of national jurisdiction (ibid., para. 80).

40. My delegation referred earlier to the concept of a security zone of 200 miles or which would, in any case, cover the continental shelf. This initiative and that of the Brazilian delegation have the undoubted merit of considering the interests of the coastal States and could be combined very easily in a single text for examination by the Committee.

41. The competent Argentine bodies are studying with the greatest interest the working paper (ENDC/264) submitted by Brazil; we shall thus be in a position to revert to this particular question as soon as possible.

42. Having submitted these first ideas to the Committee, I should like before concluding to reiterate that, while my delegation understands the importance attaching

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1/ United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 402, p.71 et seq.

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to the measures to which I have referred earlier for halting and preventing the arms race, we consider that in substance they are no more than mere collateral steps. The great objective which we have set outselves and to which Argentina is firmly resolved to give all its support is general and complete disarmament under adequate international control. So long as we fail to achieve it we shall be faced by mere palliatives, and the peace and security of States, to which we all aspire, will continue to be a goal difficult to attain.

43. Mr. ESCHAUZIER (Netherlands): The concluding remarks (ENDC/PV.426, para. 85) of my first statement in this Committee on 7 August dealt with the increasingly qualitative character of the current nuclear arms competition. It is a sobering thought and far from reassuring that in the period between the two world wars several attempts were made at "qualitative disarmament", as it was then called; in other words, attempts were made to restrain the production and use of certain categories of weapons. In retrospect those types of weapons now appear almost primitive in comparison with contemporary arsenals and the destructive power of the weaponry now available, being developed or still on the drawing board.

44. Had governments in the days of the League of Nations been able to look into the future they would have been shocked beyond imagination. Perhaps such forebodings would have prompted them to make further desperate efforts to change the fateful course of events which led to the present precarious balance of terror. Even in those days things may have looked bad enough as they were. None the less, the League failed. In our own age the writing on the wall is unmistakably clear. The technology of war has reached a stage of a fundamentally different and incomparably more ominous order of magnitude, dwarfing the military potential of the past era. The only hope for the security of nations now lies in containing the current arms race and in the reduction and eventual elimination of armaments -- in the first instance of nuclear weapons.

45. The provisional agenda (ENDC/236, p. 3) adopted by the Committee on 15 August 1968 offers broad guidelines for reaching that goal. Its four main categories -- namely, measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament, non-nuclear measures, other collateral measures and, lastly, general and complete disarmament -- together constitute a realistic programme of work. Of course, nuclear arms control and disarmament should have the highest priority. At the same time we ought to maintain a certain flexibility of choice. As I said in my first statement,

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without losing sight of the ultimate objective we should be alert to seize upon any opportunity to contain and reverse the arms race and reduce the risk of an outbreak of war (ENDC/PV.426, para. 78). If this premise is accepted it becomes obvious that measures of non-armament may well be a prelude to and a catalyst for actual disarmament measures.

46. The Committee's programme of work, as contained in its agenda, is foreshadowed in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*) adopted by the General Assembly in June 1968. It has been pointed out in this Committee that the obligation of the nuclear Powers to strive to stop the nuclear arms race and to achieve nuclear disarmament was recognized long before the conclusion of that Treaty and is not, in the first place, based on article VI. My delegation concurs with that view. But it is also true that article VI gives strong support and adds further urgency to negotiations by the major Powers on those two crucial issues and on general and complete disarmament. Due attention might be given to this aspect in the Committee's report to the United Nations General Assembly.

47. Before turning to another subject, my delegation would like to join previous speakers who have urged an early start to the bilateral discussions on the limitation of nuclear armaments. We reiterate the hope that those negotiations, for which the world at large is anxiously waiting, will no longer be delayed.

48. I should now like to make a few remarks on three different topics which have been before this Committee during this session: first, a complete test ban; second, a cut-off of fissionable materials; and, lastly, chemical and biological warfare.

49. The most effective collateral measure to curb the "qualitative" nuclear arms race remains the prohibition of all nuclear tests by extending the present partial ban to underground tests. The United Nations General Assembly continues to call for the earliest possible conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Over the past years this Committee has spent a great deal of time trying to find a generally acceptable method of verification of a ban on underground tests. We recognize with gratitude the constructive role and the untiring efforts of the Committee's non-aligned members in this respect. The most valuable initiatives of the Swedish Government have gone a long way towards identifying and clarifying the technical as well as the political crucial issues which remain unsolved. The working paper containing draft articles for a

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comprehensive test ban (ENDC/242) submitted by the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, commends itself as a well considered and thought-provoking attempt to translate -- for the first time, as far as I am aware -- certain general concepts into specific, tentative treaty language. The immediate result, as borne out by the current debate, has been to focus our attention more sharply than ever on the very core of the problem, namely the question of verification.

50. As a newcomer in this Committee, my delegation has benefited considerably from the exchange of views on this subject and from the expert advice provided by several delegations. The wealth of scientific and technical material and the wide range of opinions and proposals put forward during this session require further study. But while being unable at this juncture to take a firm position on the broad issues involved, we have nevertheless become convinced that a first practical step can be made in response to paragraph 3 of United Nations General Assembly resolution 2455 (XXIII) (ENDC/237), recommending that States should contribute to an effective international exchange of seismic data. My delegation therefore fully supports the proposal of the representative of Canada, Ambassador Ignatieff, that the Committee recommend to the twenty-fourth General Assembly that clarification be sought from governments along the lines proposed in his revised working paper (ENDC/251/Rev.1). The limited aim of his proposal is to ascertain how access to seismological data can be enlarged and improved by a seismological worldwide data exchange, leaving aside for the time being the question of adequate verification. This objective seems to be in line with some of the observations made by the representative of Japan, Ambassador Asakai, in his statement on 31 July (ENDC/PV.424).

51. My delegation also fully endorses the seismic investigation proposal which was first made by the United States representative during the twenty-third General Assembly and subsequently elaborated in this Committee in a working paper (ENDC/252). In our view the proposed experiment, which will take place within a few days, should have a systematic follow-up. The results of the experiment -- denoted Project Rulison -- will facilitate further analysis of seismological characteristics and will provide a basis for systematizing worldwide use for seismic purposes of the information released on underground explosions. We hope that the Government of the USSR will be prepared to co-operate in such a programme. For the information of the Committee I should like

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to state that in my country there are at present three seismic monitoring stations in operation, which make available their processed data to the international centres in Strasbourg, Edinburgh, Washington and Moscow.

52. I should like to remind my fellow representatives of another question of long standing, namely the cut-off of fissionable material for weapons purposes. At our meeting on 8 April the delegation of the United States made a striking new proposal for a verifiable cut-off (ENDC/PV.401). The United States offer was welcomed by several delegations, but subsequently relegated to the background. My delegation feels it deserves our renewed attention before the closure of this session.

53. A proposal for a cut-off was first made by the United States more than ten years ago. As regards the method of verification, however, the present offer contains a significant new element. It is now suggested that verification of an agreed cut-off should no longer be based on some form of adverse inspection but be entrusted to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna. In our view this approach is a most fortunate one. The IAEA has been designated in the Treaty of Tlatelolco (ENDC/186) as the appropriate United Nations body to ensure compliance with the undertaking not to manufacture nuclear weapons. Likewise, the non-nuclear parties to the Treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons accept IAEA safeguards as set forth in article 3 of that Treaty. My Government welcomed the declaration by the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States that they intend voluntarily to place their peaceful nuclear installations under Agency controls. The freezing of the production of fissionable material for weapons use, as outlined by our former colleague, Ambassador Fisher, (ENDC/PV.401) would go one step further. It is true that the proposed measure does not affect the considerable stocks of fissionable material of the major nuclear Powers. In the short run, it may well be that it may not significantly inhibit the nuclear potential of those Powers. But its medium-term and long-term effect cannot fail to act as a brake on the further development of nuclear weapons. Ambassador Fisher reminded this Committee pointedly that:

> "... the nuclear confrontation would be at a much lower level and the world would be a much better place if we had been able to obtain a cut-off when it was first proposed". (ibid., para. 13)

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54. In the context of a cut-off the United States Government now proposes that the IAEA should safeguard the nuclear material in peaceful nuclear activities and verify the continued shut-down of any facilities for the production of fissionable material that are closed. From the practical point of view, it should not be difficult to reach agreement on the required safeguards and the method of verification by the Vienna Agency. The nuclear Powers could avail themselves of the Agency's safeguards system to the same extent as the non-nuclear-weapon States under the non-proliferation Treaty, and to my knowledge non-intrusive techniques for verifying the shut-down of declared nuclear installations have reached an advanced experimental stage. It would be regrettable, therefore, in the view of my delegation, if the Committee did not have a second look at the United States proposal now that it has become clear that we shall have more time at our disposal before the current session comes to an end.

55. In the third place I should like to make a few observations on the question of chemical and biological warfare. My delegation would like to add its voice to the general praise for the high standard and the clarity of the report of Secretary-General U Thant on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effect of their possible use (A/7575). We are pleased that an expert from the Netherlands was a member of the group of consultant experts, which completed its task in a remarkably short time considering the complexities of the subject-matter.

56. A great merit of the report is that it is concise but packed with facts and relevant considerations, all presented with scrupulous objectivity. We are glad to note that it is now available in print, since it is particularly suited to be given the widest possible distribution. Our sincere thanks go to the Secretary-General, the members of the group, its Chairman, Mr. Epstein and his assistants from the United Nations staff.

57. In 1966 and 1968 the General Assembly, in resolutions 2162 B (XXI) (ENDC/185) and 2454 A (XXIII) (ENDC/237) called for strict observance by all States of the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (A/7575, p.117) and invited all States to accede to that Protocol. To date, sixty-two States have ratified or acceded to it. Since it is the only widely accepted international instrument of its kind, a further effort should be made to ensure universal adherence to the Protocol, which prohibits the use of chemical and biological weapons in war. In view of the horror those weapons

(Mr. Eschauzier, Netherlands)

inspire and of the unpredictable scope of their effects we are all agreed, first that the obligations of the parties under the Geneva Protocol should remain intact and that the validity of its principles and objectives should in no way be weakened; and, secondly, that we should examine whether the existing ban on the use of C and B weapons could be rendered more effective by prescribing also the development, production and stockpiling of those weapons.

58. In dealing with the problem of a ban on the production of C and B weapons there seems to be general agreement that the best course would be not to change but to supplement the Geneva Protocol, but there are doubts and differences of opinion when we tackle the question whether it would be preferable to deal with both categories of weapons in a single convention or in two separate conventions. And if the latter procedure were to be adopted we would still have to make up our minds whether we ought to proceed with both conventions simultaneously or follow the proposal by the delegation of the United Kingdom and concentrate in the first instance on biological weapons (ENDC/PV.418, paras.15 et seq.).

59. In the light of the debate in this Committee it is clear that some delegations are of the opinion that the non-production of biological weapons cannot be separated from that of chemical means of warfare, while others feel less strongly about it or are attracted by the proposal of the United Kingdom. At this juncture I should like to thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for submitting a draft convention and a draft Security Council resolution, now available in a revised form (ENDC/255/Rev.1), to which the same words of appreciation apply as those I used with regard to the Swedish draft (ENDC/242) on a complete test ban.

60. While reserving my delegation's position for the moment, I wish to assure the Committee that the Netherlands Government, as a party to the Geneva Protocol, is anxious to ensure its universal acceptance and to explore the possibilities of prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons, either jointly or separately.

61. There remains the question of what kind of action the Committee should recommend to the next session of the General Assembly in order to promote those two main objectives. We fully support the Canadian draft resolution on chemical and bacteriological (biological) warfare (ENDC/266).

(Mr. Eschauzier, Netherlands)

62. The Committee has before it also a working paper on a proposed declaration by the United Nations General Assembly regarding the prohibition of the use of chemical and biological methods of warfare (ENDC/265) submitted by Mrs. Myrdal on behalf of the group of twelve (CCD/PV.431, para.71 et seq.). We have noted that paper with interest and shall give due attention to it.

63. In conclusion I wish to restate that the basic position of my delegation is that in no circumstances should the General Assembly take any action which might undermine the authority of the Geneva Protocol and deter States which have not yet adhered to it from doing so.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 432nd plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Kroum Christov, representative of Bulgaria.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Argentina and the Netherlands.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 2 September 1969, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.